DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
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1713

Jonestown and the Peoples Temple - Chronology, 1974-78

6-7-74 Embassy requests authority to sign on seamen to a vessel owned by the Peoples Temple. (Georgetown 930 - Log 1)

6-13-74 Embassy describes Peoples Temple settlement in northwest Guyana. (Georgetown 977 - Log 5)

7-2-74 Embassy Caracas makes further inquiries concerning Peoples Temple settlement. (Caracas 6033 - Log 7)

7-13-74 Embassy officers make first visit to Peoples Temple community at Jonestown. (Georgetown 1236 - Log 11)

2-2-77 U.S. Customs Service launches investigation of possible arms smuggling by the Peoples Temple from the U.S. to Guyana. (U.S. Customs file SF 23PR780024 - Log 358)

4-1-77 Embassy reports GOG concern over large-scale migration to Jonestown and the political orientation of the Peoples Temple. Report also indicates close working relationships to date between the Peoples Temple and the GOG, particularly the Ministry of National Development. (Georgetown 671 - Log 14)

8-22-77 Embassy reports a telephone call by San Francisco private investigator Joseph Mazor concerning children allegedly brought to Jonestown illegally by the Peoples Temple. (Georgetown 1981 - Log 15)

8-25-77 Embassy discusses potential child custody cases with GOG.
(Georgetown 2010 - Log 16)

8-25-77 Department informs Embassy that Caroline Sue Looman reportedly wishes to leave the Peoples Temple.
(State 202932 - Log 17)

8-30-77 Department informs Embassy that Jeffrey A. Haas, attorney for the parents of John Victor Stoen, is traveling to Guyana in an effort to obtain custody of the child pursuant to a California court order.
(Department 206679 - Log 20)

8-30-77 Consul travels to Jonestown to interview Caroline Looman and others.
(Georgetown 2079 and 2087 - Logs 21 and 22)

9-6-77 Embassy reports further contact with investigator Mazor re custody of children, recounts accusations against the Peoples Temple from several sources, and comments on the difficulty and delicacy of its role re the Peoples Temple.
(Georgetown 2132 - Log 24)

9-8-77 Embassy confirms the presence of John Victor Stoen in Guyana and reports unsuccessful attempt by attorney Haas to serve papers on Jones.
(Georgetown 2175 - Log 26)

9-12-77 Embassy reports failure of further attempt by Haas to serve papers and that the attitude of Jonestown residents toward him was hostile but not violent.
(Georgetown 2206 - Log 28)

9-14-77 Embassy reports issuance of an emergency passport to John Victor Stoen in the event Haas is successful in obtaining custody. (Georgetown 2236 - Log 31)

9-19-77 Embassy reports that the Stoen case has entered the political arena impeding its progress and that Charge has discussed it with the Foreign Minister and Prime Minister. (Georgetown 2269 - Log 33)

9-22-77 Embassy reports that it has been informed by the Foreign Minister that the GOG has decided to act on court orders issued on Sept. 10 in response to the Embassy's note requesting due process. (Georgetown 2316 - Log 35)

9-23-77 Embassy reports that, while not permitted to attend hearings in the Stoen case which are held en camera, the Consul has been available outside the Judge's Chambers during the hearings. Embassy also reports Peoples Temple members are circulating a story that the CIA is attempting to assassinate the Rev. Jones. (Georgetown 2334 - Log 36)

10-12-77 Embassy reports that Judge ruled against motion submitted by the Stoen's local attorneys on October 6 and that the next hearing would be held on November 18. (Georgetown 2528 - Log 41)

11-25-77 Joseph Freitas, District Attorney of San Francisco, writes the Secretary transmitting the order of the California Superior Court in the Stoen case. (Log 407)

12-8-77 Congressman Ryan writes the Secretary re the Stoen case. (Log 413)

12-8-77 Report by Consul R. McCoy with a general description of Jonestown and surrounding areas.
(Georgetown DS-4 - Log 414)

12-15-77 Consul R. McCoy conducts a lengthy interview with representatives of Peoples Temple concerning their anxiety over his forthcoming visit to Jonestown.
(Log 417)

12-23-77 Memo from R. Hennemeyer, Consular Affairs, to S. Shelton, ARA, requesting ARA consult with Guyanese Ambassador Laurence E. Mann urging expeditious handling of child custody matters by the GOG; memo notes Ambassador Mann's interest and previous personal involvement with the Peoples Temple.
(Log 427)

1-5-78 Department informs Embassy of the interest of Congressman Leo J. Ryan of California in the Stoen case and requests that the Embassy attempt to have an observer present during the trial scheduled for Jan. 7, 1978.
(State 2640 - Log 61)

1-6-78 Department informs Embassy of criticism of the Embassy's handling of the Stoen case to date received from attorney Haas.
(State 4065 - Log 63)

1-9-78 Embassy reports a court hearing in the Stoen case. Consul not allowed to be present.
(Georgetown 9292 - Log 64)

1-11-78 Memo from S. Shelton (ARA) to R. Hennemeyer (CA) reports substance of a conversation with Ambassador Mann and indicates that child custody cases are primarily a consular matter.
(Log 435)

1-11-78 Memo by Consul R. McCoy reports that visas for Mr. and Mrs. Tim Stoen had been curtailed from one month to two weeks and indicates this is probably a harassment tactic by the Peoples Temple.
(Log 436)

1-11-78 Embassy reports on Stoen case hearing held January 10 and that the Judge has reserved his decision on motions and orders.
(Georgetown 147 - Log 66)

1-14-78 Embassy sends two Diplomatic Notes to the GOG, one protesting pressure on Mr. and Mrs. Stoen to shorten their stay in Guyana, and the other protesting the apparent intervention of the GOG into the judicial process in the Stoen case.
(Log 438)

1-14-78 Embassy reports that Mr. and Mrs. Stoen had been ordered to leave Guyana within 24 hours with no reason being given, but that after its intervention with the Foreign Minister the order was lifted.
(Georgetown 202 - Log 76)

1-18-78 Letter from Consul R. McCoy to D. Girdner, Social Security Administration, explaining steps taken to assure proper handling of social security checks of Jonestown residents.
(Log 439)

1-18-78 Embassy summarizes the activities and impressions of Consul R. McCoy during his visits to Jonestown on August 30 and January 11.
(Georgetown 252 - Log 79)

1-19-78 Embassy reports that the Judge in the Stoen case has not ruled on motions; that the Rev. Jim Jones told the Consul that he is the father of John Victor Stoen and that he can prove it; and that Mr. and Mrs. Tim Stoen departed Guyana on January 18 for business reasons.
(Georgetown 270 - Log 80)

1-30-78 Department provides informal guidance to the Embassy on the handling of the Stoen case in view of the Privacy Act and constitutional protections.
(Log 452)

2-1-78 Embassy reports on the status of the Stoen case indicating probably lengthy delays and on its own role and activities re the Stoen case.
(Georgetown 406 - Log 84)

2-7-78 Department reports on visit of Mr. Timothy Stoen to the Department (SCS) to discuss the Stoen case.
(State 32341 - Log 88)

2-9-78 Department informs Embassy of strong congressional interest in the Stoen case and suggests Embassy may wish to retain local counsel to advise it.
(State 34403 - Log 89)

2-14-78 Department instructs Embassy to approach the GOG to inquire when a decision can be expected in the Stoen case.
(State 39014 - Log 91)

2-15-78 Embassy reports advice from Stoen's local counsel that delays are not unusual in such a case and that Consul has an appointment to discuss the case with the Minister of Justice.
(Georgetown 549 - Log 92)

2-17-78 Embassy advises against its retaining local counsel.
(Georgetown 581 - Log 96)

2-17-78 Memo to the files reports on visits of Mrs. Jim Jones to the Department (SCS) and to the staff members of several Senators urging that the U.S. Government stay out of the Stoen case.
(Log 501)

2-24-78 Embassy reports meeting of Consul with the Minister of Justice indicating that the Minister assures due process to all parties but notes that delays are not unusual in custody cases.
(Georgetown 631 - Log 97)

3-15-78 Mr. Tim Stoen writes to the Secretary thanking him for the sympathetic concern of Department personnel concerning the welfare of John Victor Stoen.
(Log 526)

3-17-78 Department informs Congressman Ryan and others of the status of the Stoen case.
(Logs 527-557)

4-17-78 Letter from Richard C. Wagner To Whom It May Concern covering affidavits that residents of Jonestown are being held against their will or otherwise mistreated.
(Log 566)

5-3-78 Embassy reports that five members of the Peoples Temple have applied for Guyanese citizenship.
(Georgetown 1411 - Log 109)

5-10-78 Consul meets with several Peoples Temple members who have applied for Guyanese citizenship to explain the risks of this action.
(Georgetown 1544 - Log 115)

5-12-78 Mr. Tim Stoen writes to the Secretary forwarding a petition that he protect the human rights of U.S. citizens in Jonestown and a petition entreating Prime Minister Forbes Burnham of Guyana to prevent further violations of human rights at Jonestown. Department did not respond to this letter.
(Log 571)

5-15-78 Mrs. Deborah Layton Blakey informs Consul that she wishes to sever her connections with the Peoples Temple and return to the U.S. Consul issues an emergency passport and assists her to leave the country.
(Georgetown 1545 - Log 116)

5-30-78 Embassy reports on its actions in assisting Mrs. Katherine Hunter, mother of Peoples Temple member, to leave Guyana and alleged harassment of Mrs. Hunter prior to her departure.
(Georgetown 1718 - Log 121)

6-6-78 Embassy indicates concern that Jonestown is beyond the effective jurisdiction of Guyanese authorities, and, if appropriate, requests instructions that it urge the GOG to exercise effective jurisdiction.
(Georgetown 1815 - Log 126)

6-15-78 Attorney Jeffrey Haas writes to various officials in the Department forwarding an affidavit from Mrs. Deborah Blakey alleging serious mistreatment of members of Peoples Temple at Jonestown and reporting possibility of mass suicide should the community feel threatened. Department files contain no response to these letters.
(Logs 574, 575 and 578)

6-20-78 Embassy reports that two journalists from the National Enquirer who had come to Guyana to do a story on the Peoples Temple were pressured to leave the country by the GOG.
(Georgetown 2028 - Log 129)

6-26-78 Department responds to the Embassy's request for guidance and instructions stating that GOG jurisdiction is assumed but that an approach to the GOG urging it to exercise effective jurisdiction could be construed as U.S. Government interference.
(State 161993 - Log 130)

8-10-78 Embassy reports that a consular visit to Jonestown scheduled for August 2, 1978 had to be aborted because of weather conditions.
(Georgetown 2570 - Log 134)

8-10-78 Embassy reports that judge hearing in the Stoen case has disassociated himself from the case and returned it to the Chief Justice alleging harassment designed to influence the outcome of the case.
(Georgetown 2629 - Log 135)

9-8-75 Department informs Georgetown that it has been contacted by Mr. Tim Stoen concerning the withdrawal of the judge hearing in the Stoen case. Department requests the Embassy to informally discuss the matter with the GOG urging due process.
(State-228391 - Log 136)

9-22-78 Department informs the Embassy of the call by Congressman Ryan and Ms. Jackie Spiers on Assistant Secretary Vaky on Sept. 15 to discuss their forthcoming visit to Guyana and Jonestown. Department asks for Embassy views on handling of the CODEL and possible problems.
(State 241892 - Log 141)

9-23-78 Embassy reports a press conference by attorney Mark Lane in Georgetown in which he charges that the U.S. Government is conspiring to destroy the Peoples Temple in Jonestown. Lane reportedly threatened to file suit against government officials and agencies including the CIA, the FBI, and the Department of State.
(Georgetown 3098 - Log 142)

9-25-78 Embassy responds to Department's request for views outlining the logistical problems in visiting Jonestown and emphasizing the need to get prior agreement of the Peoples Temple as well as the possible consequences of an attempt to force entry.
(Georgetown 3125 - Log 143)

10-3-78 Mr. Tim Stoen informs the Department that in view of the failure of the judicial process in Guyana he is prepared to go there and retrieve his son by force if necessary within two months.
(Log 587)

10-6-78 Department reports receipt of a telegram from Mr. Timothy Stoen threatening to recover his son by any means necessary and expressing alarm at mass suicide rehearsals documented in Blakey affidavit.
(State 255332 - Log 147)

10-10-78 Embassy reports that the Stoen case has been assigned to another high court justice and a hearing set for November 7.
(Georgetown 3338 - Log 148)

10-10-78 Department reports on a meeting between Department officers and members of Ryan's staff on October 3 to discuss proposed visit to Jonestown.
(State 256273 - Log 149)

11-1-78 Department reports on a meeting between members of Congressman Ryan's staff and various Department officers on October 25 to discuss the proposed visit.
(State 277716 - Log 155)

11-1-78 Department forwards the text of a letter from Congressman Ryan to the Rev. Jim Jones explaining the reasons for the Congressman's desire to visit Jonestown.
(State 278140 - Log 156)

11-2-78 Embassy describes negotiations with the Peoples Temple and the GOG concerning the forthcoming visit as well as logistical arrangements and difficulties.
(Georgetown 3600 - Log 158)

11-5-78 Embassy reports the Peoples Temple's rejection of Congressman Ryan's visit and subsequent negotiations with the Peoples Temple and GOG officials leading to a final acceptance of the visit by the Peoples Temple.
(Georgetown 3619 - Log 160)

11-9-78 Department officers meet with members of Congressman Ryan's staff to discuss various aspects of the forthcoming visit.
(Log 596)

11-13-78 Congressman Ryan accompanied by members of his staff and also Mrs. Deborah Blakey, former member of the Peoples Temple, and other members of the Concerned Relatives Organization including Mrs. Grace Stoen, meets in the Department with political, legal, and consular officers to review charges of mistreatment of Jonestown residents and arrangements for the forthcoming trip.
(Log 597)

11-14-78 Embassy requests guidance on a statement of its legal position and responsibilities with respect to the Peoples Temple. (Georgetown 3714 - Log 164)

11-14-78 CODEL Ryan arrives in Georgetown. (Georgetown 4114 at Tab 7)

11-15-78 CODEL Ryan receives extensive briefing from Ambassador Burke and Embassy staff. (Georgetown 4114 at Tab 7)

11-15-78 Embassy reports difficulties of journalist Ron Javers in entering Guyana and its efforts to assist him. (Georgetown 3729 - Log 165)

11-15-78 Embassy reports difficulties of other journalists attempting to enter Guyana without visas and its efforts to assist. (Georgetown 3734 - Log 166)

11-15-78 Department approves a statement on the legal position of the Embassy re the Jonestown community for use as necessary. (State 289798 - Log 167)

11-16-78 Embassy reports a statement released by the Peoples Temple denouncing CODEL Ryan as part of national conspiracy against the Peoples Temple. (Georgetown 3749 - Log 168)

11-16-78 Congressman Ryan meets with his staff and concerned relatives while other members of his staff consult with Embassy officers. (Georgetown 4114 at Tab 7)

11-16-78 Ambassador meets with concerned relatives accompanying Congressman Ryan. (Georgetown 3761 - Log 169)

11-17-78 CODEL Ryan accompanied by press and some concerned relatives departs Georgetown by air for Port Kaituma in Jonestown. (Georgetown 4114 at Tab 7)

11-18-78 Embassy reports by flash message that CODEL Ryan has been attacked at Port Kaituma airfield and that Congressman Ryan and others may have been killed. (Georgetown 3774 - Log 170)

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